

Message Text

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SUBJECT: URUGUAYAN PRESS REACTION TO AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN

REF: USUN 0646 (NOTAL)

1. QUOTED HEREIN ARE EXCERPTS FROM URUGUAYAN PRESS EDITORIALS ON AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S LATEST CHARGES OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN URUGUAY. THE EDITORIALS ARE TYPICAL OF GENERAL PRESS COMMENT.

2. AN EDITORIAL IN THE FEBRUARY 21 EDITION OF "EL PAIS", THE NATION'S LARGEST PAPER, STATES:

A) "THE CHARGES LEVELED AGAINST URUGUAY BY THE PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION WHICH CALLS ITSELF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL SURPASSED ALL PREVIOUS ESTABLISHED BOUNDS IN THE ORCHESTRATION AND EXECUTION OF INTERNATIONAL PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGNS AGAINST COUNTRIES WHICH ARE DEFENDING THEMSELVES AGAINST MARXIST-COMMUNIST PENETRATION."

(B) "...AMNESTY REACTED THIS WAY BECAUSE THE URUGUAYAN AUTHORITIES HAVE JUST FINISHED DELIVERING A RUDE BLOW TO THE CLANDESTINE MACHINATIONS OF COMMUNISM, DISMANTLING MANY OF ITS CENTERS OF ACTION.."

(C) "AFTER SOME YEARS OF (AI'S) OBSCURE EXISTENCE, COMMUNISM CALCULATED THAT IT COULD HAVE (IN AI) A USEFUL INSTRUMENT, WHICH AS A SO-CALLED 'NEUTRAL, APOLITICAL AND IMPARTIAL' ORGANIZATION COULD PROVIDE USEFUL PROPAGANDA IN ITS BEHALF, AND THUS STARTED TO INFILTRATE AI. THIS PROCESS WAS EXTENDED AND CONTINUED UNTIL THE ORGANIZATION WAS PUT AT THE SERVICE OF COMMUNIST STRATEGY.."

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3. THE EDITORIAL WENT ON TO CHARGE: "IN APRIL, 1974 A DELEGATION FROM AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF JURISTS ARRIVED IN URUGUAY. THE DELGATES CONDUCTED THEIR INVESTIGATIONS IN OUR COUNTRY WITH AMPLE FACILITIES, TALKING WITH DETAINEES AS THEY WOULD HAVE IF THEY HAD BEEN THEIR LAWYERS, AND THEIR PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS EXHIBITED A FAVORABLE VIEW CONCERNING THEIR OBSERVATIONS OF PRISON CONDITIONS, THE SPEED OF JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS AND OTHER TECHNICAL DETAILS. BUT AFTER THEY RETURNED TO THEIR HEADQUARTERS IN JUNE 1974, THEY ISSUED A REPORT SEVERELY CRITICAL OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF URUGUAYAN AUTHORITIES, WRITING THE REPORT WITH THE SAME POINT OF VIEW THAT THEY HAD BEFORE COMING TO URUGUAY AND NOT MODIFYING IT IN ANY WAY DESPITE THE FACT THAT IT HAD NOT BEEN CONFIRMED TO THE SLIGHTEST DEGREE BY THE TRUE REALITIES OF THE SITUATION."

4. AN EDITORIAL ENTITLED "FALSE DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS" APPEARED IN THE FEBRUARY 26 EDITION OF EL PAIS:

A. "AS A RESULT OF THIS THERE EXISTS THE ANOMALY, THAT WHILE (AI) IS PUBLISHING LONG AND DETAILED REPORTS, DELIBERATELY DISTORTING AND MALIGNING, WITHOUT FOUNDATION, CHILE OR URUGUAY, NEITHER THE UN NOR ANYBODY ELSE HAS CONSIDERED THAT IT HAS THE DUTY TO DENOUNCE WITH THE SAME SEVERITY, CASES OF INHUMANITY SO FLAGRANT, FOR EXAMPLE, AS THE CONCENTRATION CAMPS AND THE PSYCHIATRIC CLINICS OF THE USSR OR THE CASTROITE DUNGEONS FILLED WITH POLITICAL PRISONERS.

B. "...WE CONTINUE TO EMPHASIZE THIS POINT IN ORDER TO DEMONSTRATE THE CONCEPTUAL DANGER OF A CERTAIN EXOTIC DOCTRINE NOW IN CIRCULATION. ACCORDING TO THIS DOCTRINE, VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN COUNTRIES DEMOCRATICALLY ORGANIZED, ON THE BASIS OF RESPECT FOR INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS AND GUARANTEES, SHOULD BE JUDGED MORE RIGOROUSLY THAN THE VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN NATIONS SUBJECTED TO REGIMES THAT NEGATE THE PERSONALITY AND DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN BEING OR THOSE SAME VIOLATIONS IN LANDS IN WHICH PRIMITIVE FORMS OF CIVILIZATION STILL HOLD SWAY."

5. THE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM AN EDITORIAL IN THE FEBRUARY 26 EDITION OF LA MANANA, A CONSERVATIVE MORNING NEWSPAPER:
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"ITS (AI) NEWS, GENERALLY SPREAD BY A GOOD PROPAGANDA APPARATUS, IN EFFECT ARE DEDICATED EXCLUSIVELY TO WHAT OCCURS IN WESTERN COUNTRIES.

"FOR THE FIRST TIME THIS PAST YEAR, IT ISSUED A DENUNCIATION OF A SOVIET PSYCHIATRIC-POLITICAL HOSPITAL, BUT IN TERMS SO GROTESQUE AND EXAGGERATED AS TO SUGGEST TO THE READER IT WAS TRYING ITS BEST TO REFUTE THE ACCUSATIONS OF BEING A

FRONT ORGANIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM.

"...IN THE LAST ANALYSIS, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL HAS
ENLISTED ITSELF IN THE PLAN SET FORTH IN GLOWING TERMS BY
RODNEY ARISMENDI (THE EXILED HEAD OF THE URUGUAYAN COMMUNIST PARTY)
ON RADIO MOSCOW: BEFORE THE IMMINENT (ECONOMIC RECOVERY OF
URUGUAY IS FULLY COMPLETED, THAT RECOVERY HAS TO BE
IMPEDED BY MEANS OF AN ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL BLOCKADE,
ABETTED BY AN INTENSE CAMPAIGN TO BRING URUGUAY INTO
DISREPUTE."

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